773 sat down in the middle of the cardinal point."

4. A ye klali ke.

The first sky, kaba noro, is less pure than the others and the impure traces of Mousso Koroni's passage, in the form of clouds, have remained there. From that sky comes the wind which Pemba had placed there while pursuing her.

But the second sky, kaba dye, "the white sky," is fresh and already in Faro's power. It is the seat of the souls (ni) of men and animals. The Kwore spirits live there and strive to permit the passage of rain as it falls on earth from the seventh heaven.

The third, kaba fi, "the black sky," is the resting place of all spirits, and the fourth, kaba mana ("shedding of the sky," is the mirror of the other three. There, Faro does his daily "accounting" of the world.

In the fifth sky, koblekaba, "the red sky," Faro hands out judgments on those who have broken the laws. It is the sky of struggles, battles and victories—the sky to which the king offered sacrifices before going to war. It is also the sky of blood, fire, and hot and harmful winds.

In the sixth sky, suna kaba, the secrets of the world situation are kept (1). As its name indicates, it is also the sky of sleep. All the

1. Dyẽ dyoka gundo be sunakaba la.

souls of spirits and living beings sleep there, each in an allotted place. [827] Sleep /29/ is a purification of the soul and dreams are the directives given to it by Faro. Fainting spells, insomnia, and illness are the result of disturbances in the displacement of souls during sleep.

The seventh sky, wolõ fla kaba, is the site of Faro's reign and the seat of power, royal power in particular. From this sky, the realm of purifying water, Faro sends forth over the world the beneficial rain that brings a soul to the grain.

[821] The sun, to which Faro "holds the rope," penetrates the first sky in the morning and crosses all the others successively until evening when it skinks into the seventh. It is the god Pemba who, weary of his pursuit of Mousso Koroni, turns red. The stars are his pores, dilated by effort.

774 827 The ni, which animates the body, is visible during the weeks following birth in the movements of the fontanel. It is also the breath, the respiration, the beating of the arteries. Like the dya, it is not indissolubly bound to the body for it leaves it during sleep in order to go to the sixth sky, sunankaba. When the person awakens, the ni returns [828] to the body and the dream is considered a memory of what it has seen, a premonition of an event concerning the individual, the family, or the village (1).

[787] 1. Great numbers of fish seen in a dream foretell an abundant catch; quarrelling signifies war; to swim suggests purification for an offense. The passage of crickets from west to east is the sign of a great battle or famine. In this last instance, the situation is so serious that the village is forewarned and each one must make an offering to a needy person saying these words: "I make this soul sacrifice to God in order that he save me (nye nin ye ni sakaka ye ka ngala ma a la ka mbo)." The village chief also offers a collective sacrifice.

774 The dya, the double or twin of the human being and its opposite sex, has a body: either the shadow on the ground or the image in the water. It may move alone or be forced to leave the person it is accompanying under Faro's order. When a crocodile carries off or wounds a man by order of the spirit, he first seizes his visible shadow on the surface of the water and his dya in the water. The same thing may be attempted by someone with evil intentions. In such a case the close contact which the dya as a shadow maintains with the impure earth makes it particularly vulnerable. In order to remedy this, the person concerned must look at himself in the water contained in a gourd; then, when his image is clear, he clouds it by tipping the receptacle; this puts the dya under Faro's protection.

/60/ The independence and vulnerability of the dya require, in the course of certain religious functions, that it be taken over by Faro for the duration of the ceremony.

Wild and domestic animals are endowed with a ni and a dya. Plants also have a ni. The ni of trees is situated in the buds and insures its growth and its life; that of cereals necessary to human life

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D. Traore. "Le Tere chez les Bambara du Ségou /The Tere among the Bambara of Ségou/," Notes africaines, January 1947, pp. 29-31.

774 Man is considered the bearer of a strong tere. Because he talks, is well informed, and knows good from evil, he is responsible for his own life and that of his family. The tere is the gaining of consciousness.

774 This aspect of the tere means that only domestic animals, whose
825 life depends on man, are bearers of this principle. Wild animals "have a hard and barren life; they have to labor to feed themselves; so they do not have to bear the burden of a tere." All that lives independently of man is without a tere. (1)

1. However, according to certain informants, wild animals might also be endowed with several tere for different parts of the body. In this case, it would seem that the term designates especially the animal's physical peculiarities and not its consciousness, as in the case of man and domestic animals.

The tere of domestic animals is not as powerful as that of man, but is also revealed by external signs. For instance, a horse that swings its head from right to left while it is tied up has a very bad tere; it is said to be its duga fufa (2). Such a beast is undesirable in

2. Literally, "the swaying of the hawk." It is said that when a hawk descends on its prey, it swings its head right and left in order to see the prey better.

a home for it "chases away happiness and success." A wounded domestic animal attacks its enemy with its tere.

774 The fact that the tere is that part of the person which suffers the
784 consequences of impurity testifies to the bonds that unite man to the
827 outer world. The tere is disturbed when a taboo, tne, is broken. If it is a good tere, it leaves the person; if it is a bad one, it becomes worse. On the other hand, the brezking of a taboo provokes a physiological change in the blood which loses its red color and becomes

774 pale. It is manifested by a loss of strength and by illnesses affecting
784 the body openings: the man becomes blind and deaf-mute. He may
827 also become paralyzed. Generally he does not die but is pursued by ills until he purifies himself.

774 In addition, the tere changes when it is detached from its normal support; it then becomes nyama, a force which acts outside the body. Manifest in action, the fact can already be sensed in the spoken word, the bearer of nyama which immediately affects /63/ the person to whom it is addressed. The consequences of this action of the word are manifold.

761 At the time of death, the tere is completely liberated. Transformed
774 into nyama which leaves the body, it then becomes a very active
778 form which, in certain cases, can attack whomever it considers responsible for the death (1).

1. This very visible but incomplete aspect of the nyama is the one that has been most studied heretofore. On this subject, see the works of the Abbé Henry, Ch. Monteil, H. Labouret, L. Tauxier. Furthermore, in the sky, in space, and on earth, there is a nyama independent of the tere. The nature of this general and vital element has not been completely clarified by investigation.

774 Sacrificial beings, men or animals, or plants for ritual use never
778 release a dangerous nyama. Their spiritual principles and forces are channeled in the course of the ritual and directed toward the benefit of a supernatural power through the altar. The same is true of domestic animals immolated for consumption, in which case their forces are used over again and their death causes no disorder since it was foreseen by Faro's law concerning food.

On the other hand, the nyama of the bush animals (nyama baka) leave their dead bodies and pursue the hunter (2). To protect himself

2. The sick man may be treated in the following manner: seven (or a multiple of seven) cowrie shells are thrown upon the hide of the animal

778 wanzo and directing it into the mask to prevent it from doing harm
304 (1). Thus, nothing of the individual forces is lost. The wanzo itself,

1. See p. 256.

harmful at the beginning, when properly channeled and directed, serves to consolidate the collective energies of the infantile societies based on it.

Only when an adolescent has lost his wanzo is he permitted to marry;
[582] any individual would refuse to marry a partner who is not completely rid of it.

The Body

826 The Bambara have a notion of their bodies and the role of the different parts and organs. This notion is all the deeper because it is linked to that of the spiritual principles that animate it.

Indeed, the tere is determined by certain visible aspects of the body, while the ni and the dya also have sexes like the body. Therefore any study should include the links that unite the spiritual elements to the physical body in order to understand properly its state and function.

Blood, which together with breath is the seat of life, is also the vehicle of physical and spiritual forces that circulate with it in the veins and arteries. The blood sacrifice liberates these forces which sustain the altars, the soil, and the beings who receive them. Certain alliances are consecrated by an exchange of blood. The clear color of blood is proof of its purity: all infractions bring about a
[841] change and cause it to become pale. Menstrual blood, testimony to Mousso Koroni's impurity and of the momentary sterility of women, is the principal taboo of the supernatural powers that create and protect life.

826 The head, which contains thought, is an essential part of the in-
828 dividual and his symbol: "the head of the members of society" is
827 represented by a stroke in the course of the rituals performed by members of the Komo or the Kworé. Man grows through his head just as a plant "grows through its head bud" (2). Man's head is protected

2. The myth mentions the "head of the balanza" at the time that men broke the

826 828 [827]

taboo by cutting its buds (see p. 43). The altars of the fields and of agricultural societies, too, watch over the "head of the millet."

/66/ and purified in order to maintain his health and prosperity. It is the seat of consciousness and will, and receives a share of the scarifications made at birth, which will exercise influence on the person.

826 Hair contains an important part of the individual's ni. It is therefore dangerous to mix it with the hair of another, for that would create a vital and indissoluble bond between the two parties. To burn it is equivalent to making an attempt on one's own life. It is buried or placed in a deep hole in the wall of the house for protection (1).

[832 789]

1. Many charms and magic spells are based on hair. In order to be loved by a woman, a man must mix some of her hair with his and place it under his head at night with a prayer. In order to keep his job, an employee does the same with his hair and that of his employer; he then sacrifices a victim over the ensemble so that the employer cannot fire him without risking his own life.

Hair and the pilose system play a part in the myth and were used to count the age of primitive men until the advent of death on earth. All the ancestors represented in the sanctuaries are bearded and hairy. Their appearance shows that, having become mortal, they lived at a time when rejuvenation no longer existed.

826 827 The pupil is the fundamental part of the eye. Its name, nyemani, "little person of the eye" (2), expresses its function. The pupil re-

2. Man's pupil, according to information that is still obscure, was made with that of the serpent and was also called nye mani sa, "serpent of the little person of the eye."

flects and absorbs the person it sees. The image is a kind of double,

826 827 a replica of the person seen, the double being received and preserved by the seer with the help of the registering mechanism of the eye. It is with his eyes that Faro inscribes in his memory the number of beings under his domination. It is through the eyes as well as through the génitals that woman is united to her husband during the sexual act. The individual who has broken a taboo is affected first through the eyes; he suffers from pains or becomes blind according to the degree of his offense.

The nose is the canal of man's breath or, respiration, ni na kle (literally, soul that ascends and descends), a term describing the very movement of life. The seat of breath is the solar plexus, kwa nye, "eye of the chest," also said to be ni dyuru ba, "the great rope of the soul." When Faro decides to take back the life of a man, he carries him off into the water and returns his corpse with the nose and the navel cut up. The mutilation of the nose reminds all that, as the master /67/ of the guilty man's life, he takes it away from him by taking away his breath.

The mouth and the tongue play a part in all the rites and symbols concerning the person. The voice is "in the throat" but man talks with the mouth. The word is a creator, an act; it carries a force, nyama, which inhabits the mouth, permeates the tongue and saliva, and transmits itself to everything it touches. It is Faro's word passing through the mouth, the word received in suffering in mythical times, which integrates the human species with the new order established in the creation.

Its organ is the tongue which, when represented in ritual objects, symbolizes it (1). Its vehicle is saliva; to spit is to give one's word,

1. The prayers recited during the initiation rites allude to the formidable nyama of the initiates' tongues.

to seal an oath. The old men spit on seeds, after having promised an offering to the Komo; the sacrificing priest, before the libation, spits prechewed kola nuts onto the altar. Husband and wife spit their marriage oath. The power of the mouth finds its most powerful expression in the griot's recitation of the device (2).

2. See p. 112.

826 827 The mouth and tongue, ejectors of the word, can be compared in importance to the ear, a receptive organ. It is through the ear that man receives and remembers the word. Its role is comparable to that of the sex organs which eject life and receive it. The ear in itself has both sexes: male by its auricle, female by its orifice. This duality expresses the basic duality of man. That is why the corpse of [164] an uncircumcised man is sometimes amputated at the ear rather than at the foreskin.

826 301 Because of the symbolism of its shape and because of its function, the ear is adorned. Men formerly wore three copper rings on the right ear and four on the left, the number seven representing the complete being, male and female, ni and dya. Women wear four rings on each auricle or, if they can, twenty-two, which represent the twenty-two stages of creation, or the twenty-two generative categories. Sometimes, for both men and women, a single ring attached to the earlobe represents the mother of the other rings (1).

[178]

1. In olden times, men and women wore cowrie shells on their ears in the place of copper rings, a custom which would seem to be still respected in certain villages today. These shells played the same part as copper.

827 191 301 776 But the role of this adornment goes much further. As symbol of the word, it is through the ornaments that the spirit Téliko, master of sound, hears what /68/ is said to man. They attract sound and send it back to Téliko and Faro, who thus judge the acts and words of men. To wear earrings did not originally mean to adorn oneself, but to hear the spirits as well as to force them to hear what was said (2). Its second effect is to embarass the liar, the bearer of false news

2. Rings placed on musical instruments have the same purpose and also symbolize those worn by men. See p. 282.

or evil words, by putting him in the position of being understood by the invisible, therefore of being judged by them. A pleasant or well-intentioned word benefits the one to whom it is addressed and this

827 191 301 776 gain is felt as a contribution to the beneficial nyama. "The spirit Téliko transforms the air emitted by the speaker into favorable nyama; upon hearing a good word, it would be necessary to stop one's ears so that this nyama does not leave the person who received it." Moreover, if a person opens his eyes wide while watching the speaker, "the latter's nyama is able to penetrate the body of the listener" and spread within it as a reviving tide. While this takes place, the good word saturates the air, helping the action of breathing, hence the life, of the listener. "One breathes," says an informant, "with the nyama of the words which enter through the eyes and ears." But this process is not one-sided. The good nyama returns to the speaker through his own eyes while he is looking at the other person. He is reflected in the person with whom he is talking and it is as though he were talking to himself. There is a beneficial exchange even when only one of the two actors speaks.

Inversely, a bad word or an insult upsets the listener and rebounds, acting upon the insulting person. This harmonious arrangement summarizes precisely and powerfully the universal movement, principle of life and strength for all beings. It comprises an individual movement provoked by the word which acts upon the body by developing and regularizing the rhythm of breathing, and a collective movement set off by the return of the word to the speaker. Because of the effect of the spoken word, exchanges are established that are favorable both to the rhythm of individual breathing and to the equilibrium of universal life. This effect is not limited to words in the strict sense; sight enjoys the same prerogatives as hearing and diction. If an object [431] belonging to a certain person is seen and coveted by another, the owner cannot refuse to give it to him. The act of seeing has established by itself, between the stranger and the object, a bond which is affectively stronger than that of ownership.

826 The articulated parts of the human body are just as meaningful as the head. The bones, more lasting than the flesh /69/ and a testimony, in the grave, of the life that has passed, are its foundation and framework.

The navel is the central point of the articulations: that is why Faro, when he drowns a person, returns the body after having slit the nose and navel. This double mutilation shows that he has reclaimed the head and the body of the guilty man. The articulations are the indication of man's condition in the new order. Where he was once

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3. Delafosse, Haut-Sénégal et Niger [Upper Senegal and Niger].

4. Labouret, Les Mandingues et leur langue [The Mandingo and Their Language].

etc., but these are still very fragmentary and incomplete. In addi-
177 tion, this society was completely disrupted by the French conquest, either by such radical measures as the suppression of slavery or by a natural evolution as a result of contact with European societies. Nevertheless, traditional structures retain their vitality, despite the effort to adapt them to European formulas.

178 The society seems to have oscillated between familial anarchy and the clan stage, according to alternating ranges of groupings, disassociation, and regroupings.

1. The Family

594 Concerning the Sudanese, Delafosse has already made the
596 distinction between "the restricted family" and the "extended family." The restricted family is composed of the parents and children who live in the "hut." Taken alone, it does not represent a social unit. The true social cell is the extended family. This is the large united family made up of a group of restricted families whose heads recognize a common ancestor. This group, composed of agnates in principle, is the ba-denya, whose members live in huts within an enclosure: gwa or so. The two ends of this [51] enclosure rest on a blõ (vestibule) where the ancestors' altar is found.

601 According to Labouret, the Bambara distinguish three cate-
612 gories of family ties: the paternal line, the maternal line, and relationship by marriage. The child takes the dyamu (honorable name) of his father's group, but the terms applied to ancestors and descendants are the same as those of the maternal line.

"... Kinship includes the following generations: tolo-mina... tolo-sama... tolo-ma-sama: who seizes or pulls ears
[820] (a belief has it that if a great grandson pulls the ear of his great grandfather, the latter becomes deaf);